

Minutes
The Greater Kansas City
Disabled Federal Employees Council
Wednesday, May 19, 2004
01:00 to 03:00 P.M.

Location: Hong Kong Buffet
11825 East US Highway 40
Kansas City, MO 64105
Conference Room

Attendees: Kendall Crosby, Jim Jordan, Daryl Sprague, Donald Ashworth, Joe Harrison, Judy Skillin, Janet Hutsell, Sultan Farakhen, Michelle Cain, Jean A. Holiwell, Tina Jones

The Quarterly Joint Special Emphasis Council Meeting convened after lunch:

Note: Upon arriving at the restaurant everyone who attended this meeting signed in and paid for their meal. The attendance sign-in sheet was sent via e-mail to the chairperson of each council so they could accurately record their member's names in the minutes for this meeting.

The FEB Asian Pacific American Federal Employees Council hosted the meeting. After opening remarks there were two speakers:

1. Connie Brown, Director of Cultural & Community Relations with Project Equality gave a presentation about her organization.

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Kansas City, MO 64114-1406
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The theme of Connie's talk was Sharing Power (The Board Diversity Project). This organization is basically seeking qualified individuals who are interested in becoming non-profit board of director's members. In order to help non-profit boards locate talent, and to help people who are interested in donating their time and expertise to them, Project Equality provides a link between these two groups.

One benefit for people who are interested in this type of community service is the training opportunity that Project Equality sponsors for individuals who participate. When people get involved in this type of service, they also get exposure to dignitaries and people of influence within our community, and the organizations they represent.

This also provides opportunities to learn leadership skills as people work along side of these experienced leaders. Find out more at their website.

If you are interested in making application to be a “Potential Board Member” follow the Sign-up link on their home page to find their application form. The next class is planned for June. It begins June 5 at 08:30 and entails approximately four four-hour sessions each week for four weeks.

2. Vicki Clark, EAP Consultant, Federal Occupational Health gave a brief presentation about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) followed by a quick lesson on Stress Management.

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First, Vicki gave a highlight of EAP. The program is in place free to the Federal Agencies who participate. Employees have access to a counselor to work out life issues with professional help. The locations are flexible for employees to easily accommodate their needs. People are encouraged to call and talk with their EAP representative to learn more about this program.

Finally, Vicki gave a very fast paced version of her Stress Briefing. There were excellent handouts provided that included “Are You Suffering From Burnout?” and “Tips for Avoiding Burnout” (along with several others). The bottom line was “Too much stress for too long a time will cause a person to hit the wall. However, the wall of “Burnout” can be avoided if people will take time to learn the characteristics of stress and its affect on their life before they have to deal with the problem of burnout. She gave several good examples to help us understand what she was talking about.

One key Vicki provided, to understanding when burnout may be getting close, was a simple burnout equation. The questions: Are you feeling unhappy? Do you find that you care too much? Do you have the perception that you only have a little control in your life? Has this been going on for a long time? will help people become aware of the level of stress they are dealing with.

A solution that Vicki presented was to learn about our thinking. The goal is to identify “How Important” and “How Much Control” does a person really have. We learned about “Controllable Important” and “Controllable Unimportant” things in our lives and the “Uncontrollable Important” and “Uncontrollable Unimportant” things in our lives. We learned that it’s important to have the correct perspective in our thinking.

Vicki pulled all this together for us by explaining that a core skill of having detached concern, or thinking “I am not the target” will help people when they deal with difficult issues or difficult people in their life. This will help people control the stress they experience during their daily activities.

We also learned about, “Preparing for the Marathon of Life” by educating ourselves. Vicki explained that people can have a better quality of life and be more productive doing the things they want to do when they learn how. People can start by learning how to shift their perspective and accepting what is. Then they can learn about negative self-talk and how to manage their energy. Those steps will help people equip themselves to control their lives and help them avoid hitting the wall of burnout.

In the end, we were reminded that there is help when it is needed through the EAP office. The first step is simply a telephone call and asking for help.

All Council Business Meeting:

After our speakers finished their presentations there was a Diversity Committee, All Council Business meeting facilitated by Cindy Hillman, FEB, Executive Director.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Cindy announced that the council chairs had all spoken to the Federal Executive Board. This was done to teach the board members about each council’s roles and responsibilities and what they are accomplishing. She also mentioned that Romell Cooks has also been presenting the Diversity Committees goals to the board on a regular basis and that people are learning about our mission and becoming interested in our activities.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The announcement was made that Unity Day will be September 21, 2004 at the Overland Park Convention Center. This location was chosen because of the good deal the FEB was able to negotiate for this event.

This event is being planned as a “Training Event” focusing on Diversity. The theme will be “A Taste of Diversity”. The charge will be \$50.00 per person and the anticipated audience is 700 to 750 people.

Each Council will have an opportunity to have a table available throughout the day and can use it to distribute information, answer questions of people who visit, or simply to display something appropriate for the event.

The agenda is being planned with a morning opening session, breakout session’s midmorning until the noon luncheon followed by an afternoon session. People who have ideas for topics, speakers, etc. are asked to forward them through their Chairperson or to the FEB.

There was a discussion about what the goal of Unity Day was this year and, “What are we trying to accomplish with Unity Day?” Several people gave examples and ideas. The

discussion went on for approximately an hour past the scheduled time of adjournment. Once again, people were encouraged to send their ideas and suggestions to their Chairperson for the planning meetings at the FEB.

QUARTERLY COUCIL MEETING GOALS:

After the discussion we quickly visited the way this meeting had turned out. People seemed to be for having time built-in to future meetings for each council to have the floor and discuss their issues.

There was also a positive affirmation given for the “Open Forum” style meeting we had this month at the end of the presentations to give everyone time to work together towards our common goals.

COUNCIL TOOLS REQUESTED:

At the last quarterly meeting there was some discussion about having a List Serve or Discussion Board type resource for people to use when working on projects. One specific example given at that meeting was getting the word out about job announcements giving people employment opportunities.

The “List Serve” concept once again came up at this meeting.

DFEC did not convene a separate meeting at today’s event. We all greeted each other and visited shortly following the meeting.

The quarterly meeting was adjourned. (Approximately one hour late.)